MARVEL COMICS

DEAD RECKONING PART 1 OF 3

IT BEGINS NOW!

DEAD POOL

DEC
#23

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PROLOGUE

THE UNIVERSE AS WE KNOW IT EXISTS IN A STATE OF GREAT IMBALANCE...

INFINITE SCORES OF CUBIC LIGHT YEARS CONSISTING OF UTTER NOTHINGNESS...

...INTERRUPTED ON OCCASION BY ONE OF A RELATIVE PITTANCE OF CELESTIAL BODIES.

OF THESE, ONLY A HANDFUL ARE CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING LIFE.

EVEN LESS HAVE GIVEN BIRTH TO CIVILIZATIONS...

AND ONLY ABOUT A DOZEN OF THESE HAVE EVOLVED TO BUILD STRUCTURES VISIBLE FROM SPACE.

SO WHY, THEN, DID THE INHABITANTS OF THIS BLUE GREEN ORB EVEN BOTHER?

IS IT A SILENT TESTAMENT TO THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT? IS IT CIVILIZATION RUN AMOK?

OR IS IT A SIGNAL... A CALL TO THE NEAREST NEIGHBOR?

IF IT IS...THEN TODAY, THE CALL HAS BEEN ANSWERED.

END OF PROLOGUE

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HEY! HEY! SOMEONE — ANYONE! HE MOVED! HE'S AWAKE!

THIS WAS SEVERAL YEARS AGO... GOD... WERE WE EVER THAT YOUNG?

MEMORY FILE

SO INNOCENT THEN... SOME OF US MORE THAN OTHERS... NOAH USED TO SMILE ALL THE TIME...

NOAH, IF THIS IS ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR JOKES --

IF I'M LYING, I'LL PULL YOUR O.T. WITHOUT PAY ALL NEXT QUARTER, ZOE!

OH, MY GOD... YOU'RE SERIOUS... HAS HE SAID ANYTHING?

NO, HIS VITALS STARTED MAKING SPAGHETTI LIKE CRAZY... EEG, EKG, ALPHA SCANS -- WE'RE COOKING WITH GAS IN THERE --

EVEN THOUGH I HAD JUST BEEN "REBORN," MY POWERS WERE ON-LINE... I COULD SEE... EVERYTHING...

...A HIGHLY DISTURBING FEELING TO BE HONEST... I HADN'T EXPECTED PRECOGNITION TO FEEL LIKE THIS --

MEMORY ERROR... INTERFERENCE... SATING...

-- NOR WAS I PREPARED FOR THE STATIC, THE RANDOM VISIONS AND MEMORY PATCHES...

...THANK GOD THEY IRONED MOST OF THE GLITCHES OUT WITHIN THE FIRST YEAR.

HAS HE SAID ANYTHING?

HE'S NOT A SEE-AND-SAY-TOY, CULLODEN! YOU CAN'T JUST PULL HIS STRING AND EXPECT --

DIXON... EVEN THEN YOU WERE A SELF-IMPORTANT JERK... BUT I LIKED YOU BETTER THEN... WHEN HALF OF YOUR BODY WAS STILL YOUR BODY... INNOCENT.

-:HGGK:-
TH-THGK... THE D-D...

...THE *DAWN* RISES IN THE *NORTH*, AND RAINS GLORY DOWN ON *ALL* THE EARTH... I SEE...

A *MESSIAH* COMES...

A MESSIAH BRINGING *ULTIMATE PEACE*... AND YOU WILL *WELCOME* HIM.

TA-DA. MY VERY FIRST VISION OF TOMORROW, AND OUT OF THE GATE I PREDICT THE *SECOND COMING*.

MOM ALWAYS *SAID* I WAS AN OVERACHIEVER.

AN ALIEN LIFE FORM WILL COME TO EARTH IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY, AND BRING WITH IT PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

HOLY CRUD...

WE'RE GOING TO SAVE THE *WORLD*.

SO MUCH FOR THE AGE OF INNOCENCE...

...DIXON PROPOSED THAT THEY KEEP MY PREDICTIONS SECRET UNTIL THEY KNEW FOR SURE WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT...

THAT WAY, NO ONE WAS FIRED IF I WAS *WRONG*... AND NONE OF THE FOUR L'S OF LANDAU, LUCKMAN, LAKE & LEQUARE WHO *RULED* OUR WORLD COULD MESS THINGS UP IF I WAS *RIGHT*.

AS IT TURNED OUT, KEEPING ME A SECRET WASN'T THAT *HARD*.

Mr. LEQUARE, THE PARTNER *OVERSEEING* OUR PROJECT, PASSED AWAY WHILE ON SAFARI TO A FAR AWAY PLACE. *EATEN*. NASTY, BUT A HAPPY ACCIDENT ALL THE SAME...

...BECAUSE NOW WE WERE A *FORGOTTEN DIVISION* IN A COMPANY *TOO FAT* TO BE CONTROLLED BY ITS THREE REMAINING HEADS.

ALL RIGHT, PRECOG... THIS WON'T HURT A BIT. JUST RELAX...

AND IF THOSE TECH BOYS GOT THE TRANSLATION SOFTWARE RIGHT... WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO *SEE* INTO YOUR *MIND* —

MEMORY FILE 398393..

SO WE PERFECTED OUR *CRAFT* AS BEST WE COULD WITHOUT RAISING EYEBROWS.

UH... I— *OH!*

-:*AHEM*:-
WELL... NO ONE EVER SAID MY THOUGHTS WOULD BE *PRETTY*, Ms. CULLODEN.

AND PLEASE... DO CALL ME *MONTGOMER*--

AAIIEE!

WHAT IS IT?!

MUH-MUH-MESSIAH! MESSIAH'S DESTROYER!

NOAH!

ANOTHER UNCOMFORTABLE PERSONAL MOMENT RUDELY INTERRUPTED BY MY "*GIFT*."

I DON'T *CARE* HOW YOU PRONOUNCE IT... *FIND IT.*

DIXON USED HIS PROMOTION TO *OVERBOSS* TO WRITE HIMSELF CARTE BLANCHE RESOURCES FOR OUR LITTLE PROJECT --

-- NOT TO MENTION CERTAIN *COSMETIC* SURGICAL PROCEDURES --

-- AND THE SEARCH *BEGAN*... I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THEN... THE *LOOK* ON HIS FACE, THAT HE'D BE WILLING TO GO *TOO FAR*...

A MALEVOLENT BEING WILL KILL THE ALIEN MESSIAH... DESTROY THE PEOPLE... UNLESS THE MESSIAH IS PROTECTED BY THE MITHRAS!

MAYBE IT'S RAZOR-BACK.

NOAH, *PLEASE.*

... THESE WERE NOT HAPPY YEARS... EACH HAD IDEAS ABOUT WHO SHOULD AND SHOULDN'T BE CONSIDERED FOR THE PROGRAM...

...CONSTANT *FRICTION*, DIXON DECIDED THAT "*FATE*" WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH...WE NEEDED TO *ENSURE* THE MITHRAS' EFFECTIVENESS...

WE WOULD *CULTIVATE* A HERO. WHATEVER. I KEPT HAVING VISIONS...BUT ONE WAS OF SPECIAL COMFORT --

WE FOUR SHALL WITNESS THE DESTRUCTION OF TIAMAT... CIRCLE COMPLETE... FOUR IN THE BEGINNING... FOUR IN THE END.

-- IT WAS *REASSURING* TO THINK MY BODY WOULD HOLD OUT LONG ENOUGH TO SEE ALL THIS PAY OFF.

THE THREE REMAINING L'S REMEMBERED WE *EXISTED*, AND *DROPED IN* FOR A VISIT... NOAH COVERED LIKE A *PRO*, COACHED ME TO LOOK DUMB.

IT WORKED... HOORAY FOR US...

...BUT WHY WAS IT JUST NOAH AND I THAT DAY IN FLESHWERKS? PERHAPS BECAUSE DIXON AND ZOE WERE BUSY CAT-FIGHTING OVER A *CERTAIN* MITHRAS CANDIDATE NAMED *WADE WILSON*...

AS REVEALED WAAAY BACK IN OUR FLASHBACK ISSUE. -- MATT

FIRST CONTACT MADE BY ZOE... AND WE KNOW HOW *THAT* TURNED OUT. PROGRAM BLOWN. WILSON IS OUT...*CANCER*.

THINGS LOOKED GRIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE... AND THEN...

BEHOLD... THE *MITHRAS*.

...DASHING, NO? I FINALLY GOT A CLEAR VISION OF WHAT THE MANIAC LOOKED LIKE... AND A *NAME*...

DEADPOOL.

IMAGINE OUR SURPRISE A FEW YEARS LATER WHEN WE LEARNED WADE WILSON HAD GONE *UNDERGROUND*, AND TAKEN THE NAME *DEADPOOL*.

ZOE ONLY RUBBED EVERYONE'S NOSE IN IT FOR A *MONTH* OR SO.

EVEN THOUGH WADE WAS *HARDLY* RECEPTIVE THE FIRST TIME WE APPROACHED HIM, WE *DUMPED* THE OTHER WARDS...

THOUGH IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN TOO *SOON*... I HAD *ANOTHER* VISION... ONE ZOE WASN'T PRIVY TO.

REMEMBER ISSUE #3? -- MATT

TIAMAT IS TOO STRONG. TIAMAT IS TOO DETERMINED. THE MITHRAS WILL DIE...

AND ANOTHER SHALL RISE TO TAKE HIS PLACE.

SO I SAW DEADPOOL DIE AT THE HANDS OF TIAMAT. BIG *WHOOP*. I'M NOT PERFECT -- I THOUGHT "TITANIC" WAS GOING TO *BLEED* MONEY --

BUT DIXON TOOK IT *SERIOUSLY*. HE *DESPISED* DEADPOOL... THOUGHT THAT FATE HAD CHOSEN *POORLY*.

ORDERED ME TO MONITOR BOTH DEADPOOL AND THE *SECOND STRING* -- THE CANDIDATE *STATISTICALLY CLOSEST* TO BEING THE MITHRAS --

AND HE WANTED ME TO KEEP IT A SECRET. I ASSUMED HE WAS BEING CAUTIOUS... PARANOID... *MEGALOMANIACAL*...

...I *DIDN'T* KEEP HIS SECRET. TOLD ZOE... ZOE WHO HAD A *RIGHT* TO KNOW SHE WAS BEING TOYED WITH...

AND HE *BLEW OUT* MY SHORT TERM MEMORY WHEN I CAME BACK FROM MONTE CARLO WITH DEADPOOL...

AS SHOWN IN HORRIFIC DETAIL AT THE END OF ISSUE #20. -- MATT

CATASTROPHIC MEMORY ERROR

END OF MEMORY ACCESS. RETURNING TO PRESENT MOOD.

SO THE QUESTION... WHAT GOOD DOES IT DO ME TO HAVE A *PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY* AND ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD TO RUN *PLAY BY PLAY*...

...IF I CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW THINGS WENT SO *WRONG*?

I'M TOTALLY IN THE DARK...

...WHICH IS AN ESPECIALLY *UNCOMFORTABLE* PLACE TO FIND ONE'S SELF WHEN THE DEVIL'S *KNOCKING* AT YOUR *FRONT DOOR*...

AND YOUR FRIENDS LAY *DEAD* AT YOUR FEET.

NOAH'S *GONE*... NOAH, WHO WAS *SUPPOSED* TO SEE THIS TO THE *END*, NOAH, MY FRIEND...

IF DIXON IS *RIGHT*, AND TIAMAT DID HIM IN... THEN NOT ONLY IS THE BUGGER *EARLY*... HE'S IN THE WRONG *LOCATION*.

THREE OF THE TRUTHS I'VE LIVED THE LAST SEVEN YEARS OF MY LIFE BY HAVE BEEN SHATTERED IN AN *INSTANT*.

IS HE IN RANGE OF ARECIBO YET, CULLODEN?

SOON. HE'LL HIT THE RADIO TELESCOPE IN *FIFTEEN*. WE'LL MONITOR EVERYTHING FROM *HERE*.

I'VE GOT ALL THE WAR ROOM FEEDS *ON-LINE*, SIR. WE'LL BE WITH YOUR MAN ALL THE *WAY*...

HOW MANY *MORE* TIMES WILL I BE WRONG TODAY... AND WHO *ELSE* WILL PAY THE PRICE?

HE DIED AT TIAMAT'S HANDS LAST ISSUE. -- SOLEMN MATT

YOU'RE UNCHARACTERISTICALLY *QUIET*, MONTY... ANY THOUGHTS, VISIONS, OR *SNIDE PARABLES* YOU'D CARE TO SHARE WITH US?

YES. THIS IS INSANE. WE'RE ALL GOING TO *DIE*. WE *NEED* MORE *TIME*...

...AND I THINK YOU *SENT* NOAH TO DIE... YOU PIECE OF *GARBAGE*.

...I'M JUST WORRIED ABOUT DEADPOOL... I JUST HOPE HE'S ALRIGHT.

DON'T FRET, MONTGOMERY... DEADPOOL'S *PERFECT*.

THOUGH LET'S HOPE YOU READ *THAT ONE* RIGHT, EH?

ARECIBO, PUERTO RICO...

RADIO TELESCOPE CENTER FOR THE SEARCH FOR EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE.

FIFTY FEET AWAY FROM THE LL&L MOBILE **WAR ROOM**, IN A NEARBY SHUTTLECRAFT.

M6J5

SIGH I AM MITHRAS...

HEAR ME ROAR.

DEAD RECKONING PART 1 OF 3

DEADPOOL... DO YOU READ?

'COURSE, BABE... IT'S FUNDAMENTAL...

JUST DON'T ASK ME AT WHAT LEVEL. I'M SORT OF STUCK ON JUDY BLOOM.

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MATT IDELSON editor BOB HARRAS editor in chief

HEY, CULLODEN... YOU BETTER LAY OFFA OPRAH'S CABBAGE *DIET*...

I CAN PRACTICALLY SEE *THROUGH* YOU.

I TAKE IT THAT MEANS THE HOLO-RIG IS WORKING PROPERLY. GOOD.

THIS WAY, WE'LL BE IN CONSTANT CONTACT DURING THE MISSION. YOU'LL HAVE AN EXTRA SET OF *EYES*, *EARS* --

YEAH? WELL, IF YOU *LOOK* WHEN I GO TO MAKE SISSY, I'LL *SOCK* YOU ONE.

HOW GOES IT BACK IN THUNDERDOME? DIXON POP A *BLOOD VESSEL* YET?

IT'S... TENSE, BUT MOVING. WE HAD TO BRIEF THE *NEW GUY*... YONGSOO...

KRRK

HE TOOK IT WELL, CONSIDERING EVERYTHING HE'S EVER UNDERSTOOD ABOUT THE WORLD HAS JUST BEEN REDEFINED.

MUST BE A *FIBER EATER*. AND HE'S COOL WITH IT ALL? HIS I'S ARE CROSSED AND T'S *DECAFFEINATED*?

HE'S SEEN MONTY'S PRELIMINARY *VISIONS* REGARDING TIAMAT'S *APPEARANCE* AND APTITUDES... COMBINED WITH THE TAPE OF... OF...

...NOAH'S DEATH.

...

YOU THINK IT'S *MY* FAULT, DON'T YOU?

IF I HADN'T KIDNAPPED MONTY FOR A *JOY RIDE*, AND DIXON HADN'T DONE THE *SCRUB JOB* ON HIS MIND...

...HE MIGHT HAVE *FORESEEN* NOAH'S TICKET GETTING PUNCHED...

NO — I —

THAT'S WHY YOU'RE DOING *VIRTUAL DUTY* INSTEAD OF COMING OUT HERE *LIVE* WITH ME... IN CASE I DO SOMETHING *STUPID* AND GET *YOU* WHACKED, TOO...

WELL, DON'T WORRY... I CAN'T TELL IF YOU'RE LIVE OR IF YOU'RE *MEMOREX*...

WILSON... I'D RATHER NOT TALK ABOUT IT —

YEAH, WELL, I GOT A *PROBLEM* WITH SHUTTING UP SOMETIMES...

SO PAY ATTENTION. 'CAUSE I CAN'T GO TO WORK WITH THIS IN MY HEAD.

I JERKED YOU GUYS AROUND FOR A LONG TIME ON THIS WHOLE MITHRAS DEAL...

AVOIDING MY DESTINY... PLAYING YOU LIKE *CHUMPS*... GOOFING OFF...

AND THAT MAY HAVE GOTTEN YOUR MAN *DEAD*.

IF IT *DID*... I DON'T HAVE THE WORDS TO TELL YOU *I'M SORRY* IN ENOUGH DIFFERENT WAYS.

BUT ALL THAT HAS GOTTA BE IN THE *PAST*. I'M NOT ABOUT WHINING ANYMORE OVER MY *ROLE* IN THIS DRAMA.

I'M NOT ABOUT RUNNING *AWAY* FROM *DESTINY*, OR EVEN TRYING TO BE A *BIG SHOT HERO*.

ALL I AM RIGHT NOW IS *FOCUS* ON THE *JOB*. *OUR* JOB.

GET *IN*. *FIND* UGLY. MAKE UGLY *DEAD*... SAVE THE *WORLD*.

I KNOW IT DON'T COUNT FOR *MUCH*... BUT YOU HAVE MY *WORD* NOAH WON'T HAVE DIED FOR NOTHING... NOT WHILE *I'M* ON THE JOB.

YES. YES, OF COURSE...

PEACHY. SEE YOU *RINGSIDE*, TOOTS.

IS EVERYTHING READY — CULLODEN? WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH YOU?

NOTHING, SIR...

JUST SOME FEED-BACK IN MY OPTICS...

I'M FINE...

I *AM* THE MITHRAS... I'M THE GUY WHO MAKES THINGS *RIGHT*, DIG?

NOW... CAN I *COUNT* ON YOU TO BE WITH ME IN THERE? NO DISTRACTIONS? NO *JUNK BETWEEN* US?

SAN FRANCISCO. THE DEADHUT.

ALMOST... THERE, AAL... MOST... THERE. OH, THAT SLOB BETTER APPRECIATE THIS...

FOUGHT OFF ALL MY NATURAL URGES TO IMPREGNATE THIS CAKE WITH *LAXATIVE*...

SO HE COULD HAVE A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED WELCOME HOME CAKE AFTER HE DOES HIS WORLD SAVING THING.

THOUGH I SWEAR, ONE CRACK ABOUT BLIND CAKE DECORATING, AND IT'S EX-LAX CITY...

...'COURSE, ALL THIS IS PREDICATED ON HIS ACTUALLY *COMIN' HOME*, I GUESS --

SMAK

NO, DON'T GO THERE, AL... IT'S *DESTINY* THAT HE'LL WIN. *RIGHT?* THAT'S WHAT THOSE LL&L FOLKS SAY... DESTINY.

AND WHEN WADE FINALLY DOES HIS PART AND CONTRIBUTES T'HUMANITY... WHEN HE'S LIVED UP TO THAT DESTINY... *THAT'S* WHEN I'LL TELL HIM...

WHY I'VE STAYED WITH HIM FOR SO *LONG*... WHY HE SHOULD *HATE ME.*

ALL THE *HIP* CATS ARE FACING DESTINY SOMETIME... WHY SHOULDN'T I?

ONE STEP AT A TIME, MY DEAR... JUST KEEP ON *TRUCKIN'*...

TRUST OL' GERRY... COMING CLEAN IS OVERRATED. DESTINY'S GOIN' NOWHERE *FAST.*

MMM. LEMON.

TOO BAD WADE'S GONNA *MISS* THIS.

ARECIBO.

...AND THAT'S WHY, IF YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES, "BATTLE OF THE PLANETS" AND "THE THIRTEEN GHOSTS OF SCOOBY DOO" ARE PRACTICALLY THE SAME SHOW.

IT'S THE MAGIC OF THAT CASEY KASEM...

AMAZING... EVEN NOW YOU'RE STILL TALKING --

YEAH, I'M A REAL PIP. SLAP ME WITH SOME READINGS, KID.

THE STATS FILTERING IN THROUGH YOUR HEADGEAR ARE ALL BASELINE STUFF. A LITTLE EXTRA SULFUR IN THE AIR, NOTHING TOXIC...

...BUT I'M SURE IT WILL ALL CHANGE...

IN ABOUT FIFTY YARDS. TELEMETRY PUTS NOAH'S...ACCIDENT AROUND THIS NEXT CORNER.

FROM WHAT WE SAW ON THE TAPE... WE'LL FIND PLENTY OF READINGS OVER THERE --

ZOE... I BEEN THINKING. I LIKE HAVING A SHADOW AND ALL, ESPECIALLY ONE IN A SKINTIGHT HOLOGRAM...

BUT WHY DON'T YOU GO GRAB A MOCHAJAVA OR SOMETHING WHILE I DO RECON. DO YOUR NAILS, POLISH YOUR GOGGLES --

WHY, WILSON... YOU DON'T THINK I CAN HACK IT?

YOU THINK I'M GOING TO FREAK OUT ON YOU LIKE SOME ROOKIE?

ZOE... WE'RE GONNA TURN THIS CORNER AND FIND NOAH WITH HIS EYES RIPPED OUT, AND HIS INSIDES USED FOR INTERIOR DECORATION...

THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO SEE THAT. FIGURE I'M GIVING YOU AN OUT --

IT'S A LITTLE LATE TO START WORRYING ABOUT MY WELFARE, ISN'T IT?

AS I EXPECTED... THE STRESS, THE DEATH OF THEIR COMRADE... MONTY'S PUNISHMENT...

IT'S EATING AWAY AT ZOE AND DEADPOOL'S RELATIONSHIP... PERFECT.

IT WILL MAKE WHAT'S COMING NEXT MUCH EASIER...

SO SHUT UP AND -- OH... MY --

-- WILSON... THEY'RE...DEAR GOD, LOOK AT THEIR FACES...

THEIR FACES...

LOOK AT THEM...

I SEE IT, KID...

I SEE.

...DEAD QUIET IN HOMAGE TO THE SPARK TORN FROM WIDE OPEN EYES...

...THE VOICES STIFLED IN TIGHTENED THROATS...

THE HEARTS NO LONGER BEATING.

ALRIGHT...

LET'S GET ON WITH IT.

=AHEM=
WELL... IF IT'S ANY CONSOLATION TO THE *HOME AUDIENCE*, IT LOOKS LIKE THEY WERE DROPPED *INSTANTLY*.

POP.
SURGICAL STRIKE TO THE *CEREBRAL CORTEX*... MINIMAL TRAUMA TO THE SURROUNDING TISSUE... I EVEN THINK THAT THE WOUND WAS *ANESTHETIZED*.
PAINLESS.

GEE...
WHAT A FREAKIN' *SAMARITAN* THIS TIAMAT IS, HUH --?

PAINLESS EXIT AND A BURIAL WITH HONORS TO BOOT...

YOU POOR SLOB... I'M SORRY, DUDE. SORRY.

TELL THE CHICK IN THE PURPLE ROBE YOU WERE A FRIEND OF MINE... SHE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU GOOD...

YOU STILL WITH ME, CULLODEN?

YES... I AM...

I... I HAVEN'T HAD A FRIEND DIE BEFORE.

MMM. SOMETIMES, SAYING GOOD-BYE HELPS.

BZZZZZT

SOMETIMES IT DOESN'T.

...YOU'LL FEEL BETTER ONCE WE GO KILL SOMETHING.

I PROMISE.

MMM-- MM--

MIT-RASSSS...

I — I SAID GOOD-BYE ON THE INSIDE.

YEAH, SURE YOU DID. LET'S MOVE ON...

MITRASSSS...

HEEERE...

SHINK

MITRASSS... HEEERE...

DEEP SPACE...

THE CELESTIAL TRAVELER CLOSES IN ON THE BLUE-GREEN ORB IN ITS PATH...

WHILE PLANETSIDE, GATHERED IN THE MYSTERIOUS STRUCTURE VISIBLE FROM SPACE...

... A CIVILIZATION REJOICES!

...AND THE PROMISE OF PEACE... TOTAL BLISS THAT WILL FOLLOW IN ITS WAKE.

FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS, THE DR'AZIM PEOPLE HAVE PREPARED FOR THIS MOMENT --

THE ARRIVAL OF S'MET'KTH, THE MESSIAH...

IT IS A MOMENT OF ULTIMATE JOY AND UNITY, FELT BY AN ENTIRE PLANET.

ONE MOMENT...THAT WILL LAST FOREVER.

ARECIBO.

A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF GUT-B-GON FRUIT SHAKES SOUNDS *DELIGHTFUL*, MONTY HALL...

POOM

HOLD ON, WILSON...THE COMPUTER'S HOOKED ON TO SOMETHING...A SLIGHT TEMPERATURE VARIANCE...

WE MAY BE CLOSE.

...BUT I'M FEELING PECKISH FOR WHAT'S BEHIND ALIEN-INFESTED DOOR...NUMBER... ONE...

UH...YA *THINK?*

SOMEONE CALL E.T. AND TELL HIM HIS *RIDE* IS WAITING...I THINK HE'S AT THE *KEG.*

IT'S...IT'S *BURROWED UP FROM UNDER THE BEDROCK! MY GOD...*

SPECTRAL ANALYSIS READINGS INDICATE HULL DECOMPOSITION CONSISTENT WITH ALMOST A DECADE OF EXPOSURE...

IT'S *BEEN HERE FOR YEARS... WAITING.*

HOLY *FRIJOLES!*

VERY *PROFESSIONAL,* MONTY.

SNF.SNF

WHAT... THEY DON'T MAKE SOAP IN OUTER SPACE? THIS PLACE REEKS.

SULFUR, NITRITES... YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS, BUT ACCORDING TO MY READINGS, THESE ARE WASTE MATERIALS...

COMING PRIMARILY FROM THE ALIEN'S TECHNOLOGY! THIS SHIP'S SYSTEMS ARE ALMOST ENTIRELY ORGANICALLY BASED!

YEAH, WELL, SOMEONE OUGHT TO POTTY TRAIN HIS BREAD MACHINE BEFORE IT THINKS IT CAN DROP A LOAF ANYWHERE IT WANTS...

AN' WHAT'S WITH ALL THE CAVE PAINTING DECO? TIAMAT A FRUSTRATED TAGGER?

COULD BE A RECORD-KEEPING SYSTEM... I CAN'T MAKE OUT THE SYMBOLS, BUT THAT PICTOGRAPH THERE LOOKS AN AWFUL LOT LIKE THE COSMIC EVENT, DOESN'T IT?

YEAH... THAT OR JOAN RIVERS' OLD CHIN... HEY, WHAT'S THAT --?

BZZZZZZZ

WHOA... HOLY HIEROGLYPHS, FLATMAN... THAT'S ME.

VREEEE

PSKOW

GET DOWN!

WORRY ABOUT YOURSELF, WILSON. I'M A HOLOGRAM.

BEE LIKE THAT, ZOE... AND NEXT TIME, I WON'T SAVE YOUR HIVE.

GET IT? BEES? HIVE? OH, I DOTH SLAY...

COMING, TO AN OVER-PRICED THEATER NEAR YOU...

...THE STORY OF A *WARRIOR*... WHO WALKS THE LINE BETWEEN *TWO WORLDS*...

SCHREEE

...HALF *CHISELED*-JAWED-*SIX*-PACKED-*CAST*-*IRON*-STOMACHED *MAN'S* MAN --

BRAKKATA

-- HALF *DEADLY JUNE BUG*. THEY CALL HIM...

VRRRT

...RAID, THE ICKY-CRAWLY *THING* HUNTER.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS... IT'S OPEN SEASON ON ALL POLLEN-SUCKAS.

SCHWUPT

ASK ME, IT'S A GUARANTEED HIT. WE GET WILLIE NELSON AS MY GRIZZLED-BUT-BRILLIANT *SIDE*-*KICK* --

-- MAYBE WIL WHEATON OR RENE AUBERJONOIS TO PLAY *ME*... Y'KNOW, SOMEONE *TOUGH*...

SCHMOP

...OF COURSE, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE RATED *'R'*... THE TEENY-BOPPERS REALLY SHOULDN'T SEE THE SCENE WHERE I BAKE LEO INTO A *FRITTER* WITH A GIANT MAGNIFYING GLASS...

...THAT MIGHT LEAD TO A MASS *BINGE-PURGING* OR SOMETHING EQUALLY *SQUALID*...

GIRLS ARE MORE MATURE THAN BOYS... *RIGHT*. *THAT'LL* BE THE DAY...

HEY, *CULLODEN!* YOU WANNA HEAR SOMETHING *COOL*? LISTEN --

SCHLUKK

SCHLUKKT... HEH... I *LOVE* THAT SOUND.

OKAY, CHIGGER... LET'S TAKE 'ER HOME... *GENTLY*, NOW... GENTLY...

SCHWUMP

SEE? I *TOLD* YOU KILLING WOULD BRIGHTEN UP OUR DAY.

BZZZZT

...

DON'T GET *COCKY*. THOSE DRONES WEREN'T *TIAMAT*...

I KNOW...

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE WASN'T TUNING *IN*.

FWAT

HE'S *WATCHING*. WANTS TO SEE IF I GOT *SKILLZ*... TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT HE CAN *FADE* ME...

...BUT YOU *KNOW* YOU *CAN'T*, DON'T YOU, PUNK?!

YOU KNOW ALL THAT AN' A BAG OF *CHIPS*! I'M OFF THE HOOK! *UP* YOUR *EGRESS*!

I'M THE HIGH-HOLY *MITHRAS*, BABY!

AND I'M GONNA KICK YOU SO HARD IN THE BEHIND, YOUR BREATH IS GONNA SMELL LIKE *SHOE POLISH!*

COME ON *DOWN*, SISSY BOY, AND TAKE YOUR MEDICINE! *TAKE IT!*

TAKE --

SMASSH

MITRASSSS... DIEEEE...

THE WAR ROOM...

SIR? YOU ASKED ME TO INFORM YOU ONCE THEY PIERCED THE *INNER CHAMBER* --

YES, *DISCREETLY*, PLEASE... THEY'RE GETTING CLOSE. BEGIN PRELIMINARY STAGES OF PHASE TWO.

PARDON MOI... BUT I COULDN'T HELP BUT *OVERHEAR...*

WHAT, EXACTLY, IS *"PHASE TWO?"*

HEAD TO THE AUXILIARY COMM TOWER. ADDRESS *NO ONE* ON YOUR WAY. ONCE YOU'RE CERTAIN THAT YOU'RE *ALONE* —

-- PUT A CALL ■ TO THE *MANSION*. I WANT THE *SECOND STRING* ON DECK IN AN *HOUR*.

YOU WANT ME TO JUST CALL HIM? JUST LIKE *THAT?*

HE'LL PICK UP... IT'S DESTINY, YOU KNOW.

HEL-LO? *CONCERNED PERSON* SPEAKING DOWN HERE! I THOUGHT WE HAD LAID THIS WHOLE SECOND STRING THING TO REST -- *HEY!*

AMAZING... IT'S JUST LIKE HE *PREDICTED*... THE DRONES... THE TUNNEL... THE ATTACK --

PREDICTED? *I* NEVER PREDICTED THAT! DIXON, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING --

OH MY GOD... WHEN YOU WIPED MY MIND... I -- I PREDICTED SOMETHING ABOUT *TODAY*, DIDN'T I?

SOMETHING YOU MADE ME *FORGET...*

WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE*, DIXON? TELL ME! *TELL ME*, YOU HEARTLESS MONSTER!

YOU *ALREADY* KILLED NOAH! I WON'T *LET YOU* DO ANY MORE DAMAGE —

Ah, MONTY... I'M S[redacted]RY, WERE YOU TRYING TO *SAY* SOMETHING?

Oh, NO... THAT [redacted] JUST THE REMAINS OF YOUR *FLESH* CRACKLING.

AAAIGH!

-*SIGH*- CENTRAL? DIXON *VOICE CODE* AUTHORIZATION... PASSCODE: KAISER...

ACTIVATE ORDINANCE "*BLACK DOOR*." SHUNT THE FOLLOWING TELEPORTATION UNITS TO THE FOLLOWING COORDINATES...

SAN FRANCISCO...

YOUR HONOR... I MAY JUST BE A "STUBBORN OLD COOT..." BUT AT THE MOMENT, I'M AN OLD COOT FIGHTING TO SAVE A MAN'S LIFE --

YOU GIVE THAT LIBERAL SO-AND-SO THE WHAT FER, MATLOCK... PINKO COMMIE...

YOU ARE AN *AMAZING* WOMAN, AL... I HAVE TO HAND IT TO YOU. THE WAY YOU'VE ADAPTED TO THIS... *LIFE*, FOR LACK OF A BETTER WORD...

...SO FAR FROM YOUR ROOTS... YOUR *POTENTIAL*...

WHO KNOWS... MAYBE ONE DAY, YOU REALLY *WILL* BE FREE.

FREE OF YOUR SELF-IMPOSED PENANCE... FREE OF DEADPOOL... FREE OF YOUR *PAST* --

BLLLT

-- 'COURSE, THAT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW WE HANDLE YOUR *FUTURE*, NOW DOESN'T IT?

ASSUMING YOU *HAVE* A *FUTURE* TO HANDLE AT ALL.

MAN... A *TRIAD* OF BLACK-OUT TROOPERS FOR *ONE* OLD LADY...

YOU SURE ARE A *THOROUGH* RASCAL, DIXON... ALWAYS *WERE*...

...I *TAUGHT* YOU *WELL*.

WE'RE A HUNDRED METERS INTO THE SHIP, WILSON... KEEP ON YOUR TOES —

HEY CULLODEN... YOU EVER HAVE ONE OF THOSE *MOMENTS*... MAYBE IN A BEER-INDUCED *STUPOR*... OR AFTER A WEEKEND-LONG MARATHON OF *TRAPPER JOHN, M.D.*....

WHERE YOU START TO GET THE FEELING THAT YOUR WHOLE *LIFE* HAS BEEN *LAID OUT* FOR YOU?

I'M NOT TALKING THAT *"TRUMAN-SHOW-I'M-THE-CENTER-OF-THE-UNIVERSE"* SORT OF WAY... THAT'S JUST *PARANOIA* AND *MEGALOMANIA* IN BED TOGETHER...

PLEASE, WILSON... THIS IS NOT A GOOD TIME FOR A RANT...

I'M TALKING MORE A *CAUSE* AND *EFFECT* SORT OF THING... THAT *EVENTS* AND *PEOPLE* AND *SPEEDING CARS* BEYOND YOUR CONTROL *IMPACT* ON YOU —

— WHILE THE *CHEMICALS* BOUNCING AROUND YOUR BRAIN PAN *FORCE* YOU TO REACT IN A CERTAIN WAY TO THEM...

RENDERING *FREE WILL* AN *ILLUSION*, RIGHT?

LIKE *THIS* POOR SLOB... HE'S HELD UP OVER HIS PAPPY'S HEAD LIKE *LEVAR BURTON* IN *"ROOTS"*...

PICKED AT *BIRTH* TO BE THE FREAK SENT TO EARTH TO WHACK A *MESSIANIC BEING*... GETS THE RED EYE A MILLION LIGHT YEARS T'GOOD OL' *TERRA FIRMA*.

JUST SO I CAN DROP HIM LIKE A SACK OF *POTATOES*. PREDESTINATION. *BUMMER*, DUDE.

YOU'LL UNDERSTAND IF I IGNORE YOU FOR A MOMENT AND GET TO MY *JOB*...

THESE PICTOGRAPHS... *MORE UNIFORM* IN PRESENTATION... LIKE A HISTORICAL [redacted] — RECOGNIZE THIS ONE?

SURE, THAT'S *ME* AFT[redacted] A FOUR DAY *BENDER* IN *TIJUANA*... NOT MY *GOOD SIDE*, EITHER...

TO HAVE SUCH *DETAILED* IMAGES OF YOU, TIAMAT MUST HAVE SOME SORT OF *PRECOGNITIVE* POWER --

THE *EQUIVALENT* OF OUR *MONTY*. OF COURSE, THIS BEGS THE QUESTION --

-- JUST *HOW MUCH* DOES TIAMAT KNOW ABOUT YOU --?

WILSON!

TOOHUGE!

WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?! I'M NOT PICKING UP ANY TARGET READINGS --

JUST A *MISFIRE*. *DROP* IT, ZOE.

MISFIRE? THAT WAS NO *MISFIRE*! YOU *INTENTIONALLY* DESTROYED THIS *HIEROGLYPH* --

LOOK, I DON'T CARE IF MY *FUTURE* IS PREDESTINED, OR BAD SNAPSHOTS OF ME HAVE BEEN FAXED ALL OVER THE KNOWN GALAXY...

...BUT MY *PAST* IS MY OWN... AND I DON'T LIKE IT WHEN IT'S PUT ON *DISPLAY* --

...

WE'D BETTER FINISH THIS *LATER*.

LATER... RIGHT... MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TAMPERED WITH THE ARTWORK...

THE CREATURE APPEARS WITHOUT A SOUND.

NO GNASHING OF TEETH.

NO DEFIANT SNARLS...

IT JUST STANDS THERE...

...WATCHING WITH EYES AS COLD AND OLD AS THE EDGE OF TIME...

...WAITING FOR DESTINY TO PLAY HER HAND.

SO YOU'RE TIAMAT...

...

NOW, WERE YOU TRYING TO HIT EVERY BRANCH WHEN YOU FELL OUT OF THE UGLY TREE...OR WERE YOU JUST PLAIN LUCKY?

THE DR'AZIM PLANET...

HOURS AFTER THE TOUCHDOWN OF S'MET'KTH, THE MESSIAH...

...WHERE A CIVILIZATION HAS JUST MADE CONTACT WITH GOD...

...AND FOUND BLISS.

ULTIMATE...

...UNDENIABLE...

BLISS.

L&L... THE WAR ROOM.

GGCH... THEY...THEY MEET... MITHRAS AND TCHI-TIAMAT...

A...A VICTOR..., C-CLEAR TO ME...

D-DEADPOOL... G-GOING TO ->GGCH<-

GOING TO D-DD-D--

"I'VE LOGGED OVER THIRTY THOUSAND EARTH HOURS OBSERVING THE MAN CALLED WADE WILSON...

"I'VE SEEN HIM AT HIS BEST, AND PRESUMABLY AT HIS WORST... BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS..."

"THE FAST-TALKING [redacted]... LOCKED IN COMBAT WITH AN *UNIMAGINABLE* BEAST —

"-- NOT FOR *MONEY* OR *GLORY*, BUT FOR THE FATE OF A *WORLD* --

"-- AND *SILENT*. STONE COLD *SILENT*.

"I'VE SEEN DEADPOOL FIGHT *BEFORE*. I'VE SEEN THE *BUTCHER* UNDER HIS SKIN... BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM HANDLE HIMSELF WITH SUCH *PROFICIENCY*...

SKTLCH

"... SUCH *SKILL*.

"HE MOVES [redacted] THE *CHAMPION* OF [redacted] WORLD *SHOULD*... HIS ACTIONS SPEAKING *VOLU*[redacted] FOR HIM...

"AND GOD *HELP* ME...

"I THINK HE'S ACTUALLY *WINNING*."

AMAZING... THE *TWO* OF THEM, FIGHTING LIKE — *WHOA*...

THESE *PANELS*... THE HIEROGLYPHS ARE *DETAILING* THEIR BATTLE TO THE *LETTER!*

LOWW

SCHK

"AND I THOUGHT *MONTY* WAS GOOD... THIS IS *UNCANNY*...

"EVERY MOVE... EVERY *GESTURE* CAPTURED..."

AND HERE, [redacted] FEW PANELS AHEAD... DEADPOOL [redacted]*CHING* THE *KILLING BLOW!*

BUT IF HE'S GOING TO DO IT... IF HE'S *REALLY* GOING TO BEAT TIAMAT...

...THEN *TIAMAT* AL*READY KNOWS*... HOW... THE BATTLE WILL... *END* —

OH NO —

"-- IT KNOWS...

"IT KNOWS!"

IT'S A TRAP...

IT'S A TRAP! DEADPOOL! FALL BACK! FALL BACK!

DEADPOOL!

...

DEADPOOL? HE CAN'T HEAR ME... M-MY SIGNAL... IT'S FADING... I --

IT'S OVER, ZOE...

BE A GOOD PAWN NOW AND GIVE IT A REST, WOULD YOU?

THIS IS IT...

THIS IS IT.

THIS IS --

WHAT'S THAT?

SCHLOK

OH... DARN.

)KAFF GR-GRAMMY..? IF Y-YOU DON'T MIND...)KAFF

...I'LL J-JUST *LIE*)HURRK HERE AND B-BLEED ON YOUR AFGHAN FOR A *MINNIT*...

Y-YOU WATCH *HOWDY DOODY* W-W-WITHOUT ME...

MIT-RASSS...

T-THAT'S *MY NAME*, SMILEY...)KOFF D-DON'T WEAR IT OUT...

MIT-RASSS... NO... MORRRE...

MITRASSS DEADDD.

PLEASE, DIXON... DO SOMETHING... GET HIM OUT OF THERE --

SO SORRY, BUT NO. HE STILL HAS A JOB TO DO.

A JOB?! HE'S GETTING SLAUGHTERED!

EXACTLY... JUST AS MONTY PROPHESIED...

YES, MONTY, BUT DON'T WORRY... HE HADN'T THE SPINE TO BETRAY YOU. I MIND-WIPED HIM AFTER HIS LAST PREDICTION TO ENSURE HE WOULDN'T INTERFERE...

IN EVERY WAR, THERE ARE BOTH HEROES AND SACRIFICES TO BE MADE. WILSON'S SACRIFICE IS FEEDING OUR COMPUTERS WITH THE CREATURE'S STRATEGIES AND POWERS —

ITS STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, SO THAT THE TRUE MITHRAS MAY BECOME THE HERO OUR WORLD NEEDS.

YOU MONSTER... YOU SET WILSON UP... USED HIM --

HISTORY WILL ARGUE DIFFERENTLY, CULLODEN. IT WILL SAY I LOST HIM TO A GREAT EVIL, SO THAT THE "SECOND STRING" COULD DEFEAT TIAMAT.

I CAN LIVE WITH THE TRUTH. THE QUESTION NOW, CULLODEN... IS WHETHER YOU WANT HISTORY TO REMEMBER YOU AS A HERO...

...OR ANOTHER NAMELESS SACRIFICE.

UH... HOUSTON? *KOFF* WE HAVE A PROBLEM...

FWOOOSH

THE MOTHER OF ALL FREAKIN' PROBLEMS, IN MY H-HUMBLE OPINION... CULLODEN..? BABE..? *KAFF*

MITRASSSS!

LIKE... THIS WASN'T A VERY GOOD TIME TO TAKE A POWDER, KID... I'M IN REAL TROUBLE HERE...

LOTS OF STUFF USED TO BE INSIDE ME DRIPPING DOWN MY BACK...

CULLODEN?

OH, POOP.

ET TU, ZOE?

DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT, ZOE... I --

I COULD HAVE SENT YOU IN WITH HIM, ZOE... I COULD HAVE... BUT I DIDN'T, BECAUSE YOU'RE IMPORTANT TO ME --

-- TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT. I WANT YOU TO SEE THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR. I WANT YOU TO SURVIVE THIS.

DEADPOOL IS NOT THE TRUE MITHRAS, ZOE. HE NEVER WAS... MONTY WAS WRONG. EVEN THE MONSTER WAS WRONG...

...DEADPOOL'S A THREE-TIME LOSER WHO'S MORE VALUABLE IN DEATH THAN IN LIFE.

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND... IT'S ALL FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

IF I DIDN'T BELIEVE THAT, NONE OF THIS COULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE.

SLASH

NNNGHH!

WHO D-DOES YOUR NAILS..? MARQUIS DE SADE?

OH, EVEN ON ONLY TH- THREE PINTS OF BLOOD... HURRK! I STILL GOT -- KAFF!

MAKE THAT TWO PINTS... HEH...

SSSSH

WH-WHAT A H-HERB I AM... NEVER SAW IT COMING...

S-SET UP... SET UP LIKE AN IDIOT... LIKE A LOSER...

...NOAH.

NOAH... GOT TO GET...

ERU TRUH VRIO ERG RIE FIF RJR BRA EMKA!?!

THWOKK

"THE GREATER GOOD?" IS THAT HOW YOU KEEP YOURSELF WARM AT NIGHT AFTER THE THINGS YOU DO, DIXON?

DID IT WORK AFTER YOU VIOLATED MONTY? AFTER YOU KILLED NOAH?

I DO WHAT MUST BE DONE FOR THE MESSIAH! IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT, THEN YOU'RE NOT FIT TO SERVE!

SWAK

Z... ZOE...

GEORGE... GEORGE... GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE...

S-S... SARONG AROUND HIS KNEE...

A'AAAAH...

WATCH OUT FOR THAT ALIEN WITH THE TEETH AND TEETH...

THIS ISN'T MY BIRTHDAY AT ALL... I THINK.

DELIRIOUS... DELIRIOUS... DESTINY...

P-PLAYED TRICKS ON ME AGAIN... F-FUNNY FUN TO WATCH ME SQUIRM...

...ON MY BIG DAY... CLEAN UNDIES AN' EVERYTHING...

FINE... BUT IF -- IF IT'S MY DEATHDAY... THEN... I WANT A PRESENT...

NOAH, OL BUD... HEY... I GOT A FAVOR T'ASK YOU...

DON'T TOUCH HER, YOU --

YEARGH!

CHOMP

MONTY!

PKOW

USE IT ON YOURSELF, ZOE!

MONTY --?

PLEASE, ZOE... GO!

STOP!

PKOW

KRAK

I'VE GOT HIS TELEPORT UNIT! LET'S --

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! JUST GO!

I'LL BE BACK FOR YOU, MONTY... I PROMISE...

ON DEATHDAY... THE GREAT P-PUMPKIN RISES OUT OF HIS SPACESHIP AND :KAFF: BLUDGEONS YOU WITH A BAG OF CANDY...

BUT I GET ROCKS... ALWAYS :GURRP: ROCKS...

YOU KNOW HE SET YOU UP... DON'T YOU, NOAH? YOUR BOSS, DICK --

ICHA-SKREEE

-- OH... DON'T MIND HIM... HE'S JUST GOING TO KILL ME...

SOME ALIENS ARE SO RU-RUDE... INTERRUPTING LIKE THAT...

NOW... D-DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, NOAH... I LIKE YOU AND ALL...

...BUT MY INTEREST IN YOUR BELT IS PURELY :HUURKT: PROFESSIONAL...

NOAH THE BOY SCOUT... ALWAYS PREPARED... I OWE YOU ONE, BUD...

DEET

HEE-YAARGH

SAME TO YOUR MUTHA...

HOME.

...YOU POOR, PATHETIC *FOOL.* RISKING IT *ALL* FOR...

...*LOVE?* EVEN *YOU* AREN'T DELUDED ENOUGH TO CALL IT *THAT.*

SHUT UP, DIXON... YOU CAN'T —

QUIET. THE WOMAN'S *GONE.* NO NEED TO PLAY *HERO* ANY LONGER...

...YOU BROKE YOUR *LIVE FEED* TO THE BIG FIGHT... WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHAT *HAPPENED?*

DEADPOOL ESCAPES.

WH-WHAT? HE —?

BUT IF HE *SURVIVED*... THEN YOU'RE *WRONG*... HE *IS* THE MITHRAS...

YOU'RE FORGETTING THE *GOLDEN RULE,* MONTY... I'M *NEVER* WRONG.

YOU *TOLD* ME THAT IN A *PROPHESY* ONCE... THE SAME TIME YOU TOLD ME DEADPOOL WOULD *SURVIVE...*

[redacted] HE WOULD *GO*... AND THAT *ZOE* WOULD *BETRAY* THE CAUSE...

AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM BOTH... *PERMANENTLY.*

OH, GOD... *NO...*

WHAT THE -- THIS ISN'T *ARICEBO!*

DIXON MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING TO THE *TELEPORTERS...*

...I WANTED TO JUMP INTO THE *SHIP* AND HELP, BUT -- THIS IS *DEADPOOL'S HOUSE..?*

DEADPOOL?

SHHH... THERE THERE...

DON'T SAY *ANYTHING*, WADE... YOU'RE *SAFE* NOW...

DON'T SAY *ANYTHING*...

I COULDN'T *DO IT* AL... I COULDN'T *DO IT*...

WHY WASN'T I *STRONG* ENOUGH..? WHY WASN'T I *GOOD* ENOUGH..?

I *BLEW* IT...

IT'S *OVER*...

IT'S *OVER*...

I... I CAN'T GO *FORWARD*...

DON'T *SAY* THAT, WADE... JUST *DON'T* YOU SAY THAT...

HE'S *SHATTERED*... GOD... WHAT CAN I SAY TO --

Oh?

0:01

DIXON.

"WE'VE LOST *MANY* *OPERATIVES* ON THIS MISSION..."

...GOOD PEOPLE. *HONORABLE* PEOPLE...

WE LOST THEM, TRYING TO GET TO *YOU.*

THERE IS A NEW AGE OF *PROSPERITY* ON THE HORIZON...

AN AGE...ONLY *YOU* HAVE THE POWER TO USHER IN...

IT IS YOUR *DESTINY,* SON...

...CAN YOU *HELP* US?

I'M NOT A MAN WHO BELIEVES IN WORDS LIKE *"DESTINY,"* DIXON... BUT I UNDERSTAND MY *RESPONSIBILITY* TO THE PEOPLE OF THE *WORLD.*

YOU'VE GOT MY *WORD*... IF I REALLY AM THIS *"MITHRAS"* CHARACTER OF YOURS...

...I'LL DO ALL I CAN TO *PROTECT* THE FUTURE, NO MATTER THE *COST.*

THANK YOU, *CAPTAIN AMERICA*... I *KNEW* YOU WERE OUR MAN...*ALL ALONG.*

TO BE CONTINUED!

DEADLINES

Deadlines,

DEADPOOL #20 was simply hilarious and was important to character development. Joe Kelly did a great job and I consider him one of the top five writers of the decade. Also, the art is superb. Even though Walter McDaniel didn't do this issue, I'd like to say he has definitely improved since I first saw his work. Pete Woods did a good job filling in.

Now, enough praise. I now will proceed to fulfill this letter's true objective. I believe there is an alien representative from the Mithras Directive already on Earth. To be blunt, I think that it is Gerry the bum. Why? Well, let me break it down for all of those at home:

1) Gerry has made friends with our merry merc-with-a-mouth, Deadpool. So, since Deadpool makes contact with the alien, Gerry is a prime suspect.

2) Gerry can teleport.

3) Gerry knows about LL&L.

4) Gerry seems to be studying humans (i.e. the French and Swedish).

5) Lastly, Gerry was saying how the X-Files are real, so maybe he was telling that French guy what he really is.

So, did I pin the tail on the donkey? I know you won't say anything if you print this before the story is finished -- if you even print this -- but it is nice to know that you heard what I had to say.

Matthew J. Acevedo
Brooklyn, NY

Well, Matthew, as you saw this very issue, Gerry is not the alien. Sorry, dude! But that was a really good try! All the points you made do seem to point to Gerry being the alien, but they fit his real identity even better! Maybe someday we'll find out what that identity is....

And uh, by the way, make sure not to miss next issue! (That has nothing to do with the previous comment, by the way. Really. We're not kidding. Heh.)

Dear *Deadlines*,

I just read DEADPOOL #20. It was, as usual, great. This issue had some elements that made me want to write in.

First of all, I'd like to say how much I liked your letters column. I read everything that I could of that fake letter and thought it was great! I like all of the subtle jokes in DEADPOOL, like the Berger baby food jar. I don't know of any children that would like "real chunks" in that flavor of baby food. Oh, and as a fan of The Daily Show, I appreciate that reference in the beginning.

I also picked up Wizard #85 while at the comic store and read the piece about DEADPOOL month (which I'd been anticipating since the first news of it). I fully intend to buy all of the goodies for DEADPOOL month ('cept maybe the bust, I'm poor). I also can't wait to know more about them. Do you think you could enlighten your faithful fans with more info on them? Also, you should make and market those balloons on the cover of #20.

I've been a fan of Deadpool since NEW MUTANTS #98 and I have every comic that he's been in ever since (SILVER SABLE and SECRET DEFENDERS back issues are hard to find), and I'm astonished at how Joe Kelly can improve this character every issue. It's amazing.

So, until Montgomery gets Epil Stop Plus for his back hair, make mine Marvel!

Scott Denham
fett@worldnet.att.net

Well, Scott, we're glad you asked about DEADPOOL month, cuz we're right in the middle of it as we speak! On sale this month we've got tons o' DEADPOOL stuff!

Make sure you check out DEADPOOL TEAM-UP STARRING DEADPOOL AND WIDDLE WADE, a charming little tale of our favorite merc and a pint-sized version of him that takes place in Japan! Sumo wrestlers included!

And, we've got BABY'S FIRST DEADPOOL BOOK, which is just the thing to give baby mercenaries sweet nightmares when they float off to sleepyland!

Aaaand, we've got the ENCYCLOPÆDIA DEADPOOLICA, a delightfully pleasant sourcebook detailing both of Wade's limited series as well as every issue of his monthly series up to and including issue #22! It's a must-have for all tried and true Deadpool fans! Run to your nearest comic shop and get these books. Hurry!

Dear *Deadlines*,

I have been meaning to write for a while, but I never got around to it. So now that I have, I've got a lot of questions and comments. First, I just want to say how much I love the book; the art is great and I love the stories. Now it is time for the questions.

The DEADPOOL/DEATH '98 annual showed how close Deadpool and Death really are. Does Thanos know how close they are? Is he the alien being mentioned in the Mithras Directive?

In issue #6, a guy named Widdle Wade introduced the characters. Was he the little person in the Deadpool mask shown in the annual?

In issue #Minus 1, Overboss Dixon mentioned Landau, Luckman, Lake and Lequare. Would Gerry be Lequare? It would explain how he teleported from Deutschland to Golden Gate Park, how he knew about LL&L, and how he knew about Zoe's neural kill switch.

Please bring Weasel back! Get rid of Blind Al and have Weasel appear on a more regular basis. He's Deadpool's best bud; he even shot Comcast in the head for Deadpool. Now that's friendship! Besides, with Weasel gone, where is Deadpool going to get all his cool weapons?

I loved the letters page in issue #20, especially the fake letter. That's all I've got to say for now. So, until Impossible Man turns out to be the alien in the Mithras Directive, make mine Marvel!

Eric Farmer
Goldsboro, NC

Thanks, Eric! Wow, more guesses about the alien and Gerry. You guys out there in readerland must really be interested in this whole Mithras deal. Guess it's a good thing the story's finally unfolding, huh?

As for Weasel and Blind Al, they'll both be around plenty. Trust us. By the way, the little dude in the 'Pool mask wasn't Widdle Wade, but if you want more info on him, check out the response to the previous letter!

Well, that's all the room we've got this month! See ya next letters page!

NEXT ISSUE:
COME RIGHT BACK NEXT MONTH FOR PART TWO OF
DEAD RECKONING!
COULD ANYBODY HAVE SURVIVED THAT EXPLOSION?
IS TIAMAT GOING TO SUCCEED IN HIS MISSION OF MURDER?
IS DELICE THE DEVIL-DOG ACTUALLY THE GALACTIC MESSIAH? IS HE? HUH? UM, WELL, NO. DELICE IS ACTUALLY JUST A DOG, BUT TRUST US, NEXT ISSUE'LL BE GREAT ANYWAY! SEE YA!
DESIGN BY COMICRAFT

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